SCHOOL OF BOMBAY 1900
BY CAPTAIN JOHN
KENNEDY [illegible]
(DUM DUM)

S. G. R. Wilkins
from
[illegible]

Bombay
6.5.02

AT ODD MOMENTS.

A BOOK OF

VERSES AND PARODIES

BY

DUM DUM.

[JOHN KENDALL]

BOMBAY:
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THE
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NOTE.

The majority of these pieces have already appeared in the TIMES OF INDIA; *the remainder, with one or two exceptions, were originally published in the* PIONEER *and the* CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE.

For permission to reprint them (in a more or less altered form) I am indebted to the courtesy of the Proprietors of these Papers.

I am anxious to acknowledge the unswerving fortitude with which Mr. H. Stanley Reed went through my MSS.; should this book find any readers, I assure them that they have equal cause for gratitude.

D.D.

18-9-1900.

To

My Two Greatest Friends,

With Promises of Amendment for the Future.

CONTENTS.

I. THE BALLAD OF BLACK AND WHITE.

A STUDY IN ITALICS.

(AFTER R. K.)

O Black is Black, and White is White, nor ever the twain be one,
Except in the sight (to the fool's delight) of a lying Son of a Gun,
But the blackest black is the Colonel's frown, his locks are the whitest white,
For his only son (he has only one), has hithered away from sight.

He has made his 'scape like a branded thief, whose steel-locked shackles are broke ;
And he has lifted the Colonel's pipe from out of the Colonel's poke ;
And he has lifted the Colonel's pouch, and the two, together, apart,
Are the one delight of the Colonel's sight, the pride of the Colonel's heart.

There's a law we hold in the blue and gold, we hold in the gold and red,
That better a Colonel be left alone, till after the beast(s) are fed.
For large the liver, and cross the grain, and the sunrise head is swelled;
And we hold it sound that his grub be downed or ever the Cat be belled.

Read here the story of the Colonel's Pipe.

His two poached eggs he has got them home, his mug he has given a wipe;
"Now what in the name of the blank, blank, blank, has come to my pouch and pipe?"
And a "fell chupatti" has kissed his feet: "O Father and Mother o'me,
"Where a hand hath fled and a pipe hath fled, together the twain shall be."

Then up and guggled the Man of Blood, and cried with an uptost head:
"Is there never a blank of the blank, blank, blank, can say where the whelp hath fled?"

And up and answered Mahomed Khan, the Autocrat's right-hand man,
" I thinking I know where the young Sahib go, I know where the young Sahib ran. "

" If ye know the track of the Moonlight Tom, the trail of the blithesome cat,
Ye know that it ends where the cornbin lends the chance of a weakling rat ;
Then first to the left, and first to the right, and see that ye walk with care ;
And when to the bin ye shall safely win,—turn back, he will not be there."

Hang on ! we're getting to the Colonel's Pipe.

As the swift bolt springs when the cross-bow tings, as the *broop* from a cheap *jezail*,
As the wild wolf leaps on the stern-faced sheeps, and the sheeps do a record mile,
So leapt the Colonel his slave toward, who cried, as he ran like blazes,
" The Sahib not roar for an 'arf mo' more, there something remains to tell."

"Ye must turn again from the close-packed grain, ye must win to the westward door,
Nor tarry a moment to speak the Syce, the son of an un-wed Soor ;
Then sniff to the left, and sniff to the right, and so, that the task be done,
Ye shall nose a track to the 'Tree, fruit, jack,' by the smoke from the Colonel's son."

How's this for high, about the Old Man's Pipe ?

They ha' sped to win to the gram-filled bin, they ha' taken a fearsome sniff ;
They ha' smelt to the left, and smelt to the right, but devil an ounce of whiff ;
They ha' nosed a track to the "Tree, fruit, jack," and, begob ! they ha' fled full quick ;
For the Colonel's son was above their heads, and was taken extremely sick.

* * * *

O Black is Black, and White is White, nor ever the twain agree;
And old King Cole was a merry old Soul, and a merry old Soul was he;
But ashen white was the Colonel's son, as wiser he wended back;
For the plug tobacco the Colonel smoked was the blackiest, blackest black.

II. ODE

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF EVER GETTING TO THE HILLS

(AFTER T. G.)

Ye distant Hills, ye smiling glades,
    In feathery verdure dressed,
Where many a pine delighted shades
    The pseudo-regal Crest ;
And ye, whom Fate in kindly mood,
Has raised above the common brood
    Of such as labour here below ;
Whose powers of drama, song, or pen
Distinguish from the Ruck of Men,
    And bid ye higher go :

Ah happy Hills, ah Summits high,
    Ah Goal where all would end !
Where once and only once did I
    Go largely on the bend !

E'en now that unforgotten time,
That hallowed path of glowing crime
My present ills can so destroy,
That married, marred, and on the shelf,
In thinking how I spread myself,
I snatch a tearful joy.

Ambition urged me once to climb,
If haply to attain
A billet in the Height Sublime,
But all, alas, in vain.
My voice recalled, as friends averred,
The thunder-stricken Waterbird,
Who, dying, sang the Tuneless Strain ;
My writings led to needless rage,
And, when I leapt upon the Stage,
They threw me off again.

But tell me, do the sprightly crew
Disport themselves to-day,
Precisely as they used to do,
In just the same old way ?
Does frolic Youth, in eager haste,
With pliant arm the yielding waist

Delight to circumnavigate,
And still endeavour to persuade
The willing-half-unwilling maid
To inter-osculate?

Do Matrons, just as ever, train
The Daughter in her teens
To shun the detrimental Swain,
And bag the Man of Means?
And is the Summer Widow's mind
Abnormally distressed to find
That, due to some malign caprice,
As fast her male acquaintance grows,
Her list of lady-callers shows
A similar decrease?

Here in the torrid Plains below,
A grilling troop is seen,
Who try and run their little show,
For Country and for Queen;
That makes us humid, *t'other* hot,
This never fails to "touch the spot"
That rounds beneath the ample belt;

Lo ! Want of Leave (to fill the Cup)
Hath drunken all our juices up,
    And crumpled every pelt.

To each his billet ; mystic Fate
    Is skinning some like Eels,
And few there are that reach the state
    Of Little Gods on Wheels ;
Then let the Maiden wander free,
The Youth enjoy his roomy spree,
    The Single Matron dry her eyes !
As fate is blind, and life is short,
If Ignorance induces sport,
    ' Tis folly to be wise.

III. AD CORVUM!

AN ABORTIVE THRENODY.

* * * * *

Discordant Bounder, void of harmony,
As foul as Erebus, as black as Pluto,
To you these presents; *Moriturum Te*
Saluto!

Myself for many a day have borne your yoke,
Till, goaded by your blasphemy pernicious,
I've come to wonder if you'll find the joke
Judicious.

HIS CRIMES.

Your song, a potent harbinger of sin,
Your leer, a furtive threat of depredation,
Betray yourself, of wickedness the in-
-carnation.

Of all the loads that Nature mis-adjusts,
The human back to bend, the feet to trammel,

That squawk is just the final straw that busts
The Camel.

In clarion strain its juicy notes ascend ;
It never leaves me, working, eating, drinking ;
And oh, it spoils that hour I love to spend
In thinking.

It's not because you're feeling sick at heart ;
Nor is it that you see a good time coming :
But simply that you feel inclined to start
Things humming.

And when, thro' your atrocious cussedness,
You see me growing rapidly demented,
Why, then you feel, I take it, more or less
Contented.

To-day, again, when close at hand was set
My *chota hazri*,—who but you would risk it ?—
You calmly happened in and bagged my pet
Mixed biscuit.

I dozed again, in weariness profound,
But woke to hear a gurgle and a flutter,
And found you'd swallowed nearly half a pound
Of butter.

Now that's a thing I'm not accustomed to!
"Revenge, Timotheus cries!"—I take my Sammy,
You know that butter wasn't meant for you—
No, dammy!

Nor did you make the least attempt to stem
Your scoffing thanks, your coarse insulting pœan,
But went aloft, and nearly split the Em-
-pyrean.

HIS REPUTATION.

Among the Birds the character you bear
Is patent from the bland contempt they show you,
Not one with any self-respect would dare
To know you.

The Human Biped sub-divides us all,
From high to low, commencing with the Classes,
And ending up with what he's pleased to call
The Masses

And this the Birds, excepting only you—
Big, small, or middling,—spotty, dull or stripëd,—
Appreciate as wisdom in the Hu-
-man Biped.

While all, from Golden Eagle down to Snipe,
—In my opinion, nothing could be sounder,—
Regard you as the very lowest type
Of Bounder.

A WARNING.

But here's a fact that you appear to miss;
That, by the Median Law of Evolution,
The Good survive, the Base are marked for dis-
-solution.

Then turn to Him, and in His fate detect
The gruesome end that waits the unbeliever ;
The Bird, with whom the faculty connect
Brain fever.

He meets a leaden end, but only strives
To cheer the sad, to stimulate the lazy ;
Unconscious that what *He* calls singing—drives
Us crazy !

While you, when Care athwart the crupper rides,
And we the cup of bitterness are quaffing,
Look on, and nearly burst your silly sides
With laughing.

HIS DESTINED FATE.

But corvine pride is doomed to have a fall;
You die to-day, so why continue talking ?
I have a scheme to silence, once for all,
Your squawking.

You loathe a gun, but, should a stick appear,
You view it as a symptom of dementia ;
"A feeble joke, and old "—*docet exper-*
-ientia.

Exactly so ! But often wisdom throws,
O'er cogent argument a veil of folly ;
And what you see is not, as you suppose,
A brolly.

The weapon hides beneath ; a quaint conceit,
Whereby—unless I'm grievously mis-
taken,—
Your smug self-confidence will soon be sweet-
-ly shaken.

I promise you, when added to the score,
The refuse heap for transient sepulture ;
To aid, in Nature's course, the paths of hor-
-ticulture.

So now prepare no longer to exist ;
The bolt is falling—turn to greet the Smiter ;
A last, long, ling'ring Squawk, and—Damn !—I've missed
The Blighter !

Exit Corvus Triumphans !

IV. THE WILTED DECADENT.

Owing to the prevalent khaki craze, poetry is still a drug in the market.

(AFTER D. G. R.)

The Wilted Decadent looked up
To the pallid moon in heaven ;
His chronoscope the token bore
Of post-meridian seven ;
But he nor sup nor sip had known,
Since yesternight's eleven.

His garb one button bravely held,
'Thwart-wise, of carven horn ;
His gracile neck no kerchief swathed,
Nor collar did adorn ;
His careless locks dependent streamed,
Unfilleted, forlorn.

Him seemed a se'nnight scarce had flown,
Since that the Public Nose

Turned from his swooning-scented verse,
To sniff the veldt-flung prose;
Albeit, a circling year of moons
Was rounding to its close.

Erewhile, th' Erotic Muse alone
The pulsing mob could stir,
But that same blessed afternoon
A stout Commissioner
Had cast him headlong from the Halls
Where moved his Publisher.

"Ah sweet," he cried, "if once again
The cannon's Boom should cease,
The slump-in-bards yield timely place
To poets' fat increase,
The martial Pipes be stilled before
The Muse's 'pipe' of peace.

"O blessed hours, when I was wont
The mystic script to con
Of those three Fathers of the Cult,
And hold communion

With William Morris, Dante Gab.,
And putneyed Algernon.

" Pleasant it was to heedful cull
A phrase, a measure chaste,
A flowering thought, and boil, and add
A sauce to suit the taste
Of that Great Gullible, which gaped,
And swallowed me in haste.

" Woe, woe to all the god-like band,
Who sang th' impassioned buss
Of bulging lips, nor ceased to laud
The lithe limbs languorous,
Of long white women, bilious-wise,
That swooned absquatulous.

" Ten moons agone, the Vulgar's purse
Was mine, in rightful meed ;
Ten little moons !—and now is none
To stay the poet's need ;
Shunned is the Song Improper for
The Doggerel of the Deed."

* * * * *

A moment's space he paused; anon,
While rained the bitter tears,
His silvern chronoscope he strained
To either of his ears;
Then sought the Ægis of the Broke,
The Triple Golden Spheres.

V. "TO ARMS!"

OR "LET 'EM *ALL* COME!"

(WITH APOLOGIES TO A. A.)

* * * * *

Now let me think; "To Arms! To Arms!"
Would be a stirring call;
But I can only drag in *swarms*,
Which doesn't rhyme at all!
What odds? Where British scalp is veiled
By sturdy British tile,
My song shall be in "myriads mailed,"
However rough the style.

From Sea to Sea the tidings send
That now we *shan't* be long,
The British Laureate's on the bend,
And Alfred's going strong.

From English pavement, Irish bog,
    Welsh valleys, Scottish braes,
The puny bards are all agog
    Themselves to don the Bays!
With crisping curls I greet the girds
    Of many a dauntless one,
Who not esteems the Worth of Words,
    And scoffs at Tennyson.

    Shoulder to shoulder, unrebuffed,
        The rabble herd combine
    To disem-bay my flow'ring tuft,
        And drink the Sherry Wine.

Not for the Penny-liner Pack
        My jocund numbers rise,
There roosts beneath the Triple Jack
        The Public That I Prize!
To furthest South, and furthest North,
        And furthest East and West,
The Odes of Austin thunder forth,
        With unrestricted zest.

Hand in the pocket, coin in fist,
The Public, gathering fast,
All, all with one accord insist
On buying Alfred's last.

My Public, 'ere I lay me down,
May I the question raise,
Is there no other Poets' crown,
Less tickl-y than the Bays?
Shall critics, crushed with scathing scorn,
Not hail, with 'covert' tears,
Your Poet Alfred's blushing Horn
Exalted to the Peers?

WHAT? Wrench from ME the Laurels' charms?*
MY Sherry quench their thirst?
Let 'em *all* come! "To Arms—To Arms!"
I'll see them further first!

**It will be seen that a deep sense of personal injury has at last led to the discovery of a correct rhyme.*

VI. TO MANDALAY—GREETING.

(BY WALTYARD WHIPMING.)

1.

A song of Mandalay !
Allons, Camerados, Desperadoes, Amontillados !
Hear my Recitativo, my Romanza, my Spring Onion !

2.

You three-striped sergeants, you corporals, non-commissioned officers, and men with one or more good-conduct badges,
You bad characters, am I not also one with you ?
And will you not then hear my song ?

3.

You O Mandalay I sing !
For I see the pagoda, Moulmein pagoda with its little pointed towers, the essentially wotto pagoda,
And the pagoda is above the trees,
But the trees are below the pagoda.

4.

I see the flying fish sitting on the branches, I hear them sing, and they fly and mate and build their nests in the branches,
I see a dun-colored aboriginal she-female, mongolianée, petite, squat-faced,
And she has a cast in her sinister optic and a snub nose, but her heart is true,
And I gaze into her heart (which is true) and I find that she is musing (as indeed I often muse) on ME,
Me Prononcè, Me Imperturbe, Me Inconscionabilamente,

5.

I see (*a page or so unavoidably, omitted for lack of space,—refer to guide-book*) and.....the wind, and the palm trees wobbling backwards and forwards in the wind (now backwards, now forwards) and I hear the bells of a temple, and I know that they are singing, and what it is that they would say?

6.

What is it that they would say, do you ask Me?

7.

How shall I tell you, how shall I make you understand?
For I know that you do not love Me, you do not comprehend Me, you say that this sort of thing does you harm, [Chorus—*So it does!*]
But I will even now do my darndest (as indeed I always do more, or less) and if you do not like it,
You can lump it!

8.

Behold I will write it as a song and put it in italics, so that even *you* will know that it *is* a song,
So listen, listen Camerados! for I am about to spout and my song shall be grand and virile. A bas your metre, *à la lanterne* your rhyme, conspuez your punctuation,
I say pooh-pooh!

SONG OF BELLS.

Allons! Allons! Tra-la-la! Hear my Bellata!
Why do you not return to Mandalay O soldier?
Do you not remember the boats, and the paddles as they chunked outside the boats?
Do you not remember the elephants, the mighty elephants, strong, mysterious, huge, impalpable, (no not impalpable) thick-skinned (so am I) and the way in which they would take up trees or parts of trees, branches, logs, beams, planks,.....etc.....in their trunks, (the beams carefully supported at their centre of gravity, the logs carefully supported at their centre of gravity, the elephants without a smile at their *centre of gravity,)*
From Rangoon to Mandalay?

For

On the road to Mandalay the flying fishes play,
But there are no omnibusses to ply.
Is there not a thirst here, and are there any ten commandments?

O you commandments! you first, second, third..... and tenth commandments! is not Mandalay the shop for you, and especially for one of you?

Ha! What is that?

Is it a sound, is it the thunder, the sudden thunder, strepitant, tonant?
Is it the mid-day (twelve o'clock) cannon?

No!

Is it not then the ocean, the storm of the ocean?

Divil a bit!

Return, return then O soldiers,
Return, you that have been discharged with pensions, as time-expired men, or as incorrigible and worthless,
Return, for it is the dawn, and it is calling to you as it comes up from China,
Though why from China do you ask me?
Then ask me another!

VII. OMAR OUT OF DATE.

(BY A RENEGADE DISCIPLE.)

Wake, for the Sun, with slowly broadening glare,
Another Day doth sternly now declare ;
And I, despite the Yesternight's relapse,
For that my Toil diurnal must prepare.

What time, my Boy, the passing moments cried,
Methought there stood Hajâm my Bed beside,
Bearing the Brush, the Vessel, and the Blade,
Wherewith to scarify my tender Hide.

How often, oh, how often have I sworn
Myself, myself to shave th' ensuing Morn ;
But still there comes Hajâm, and day by day,
Th' insistent Laceration have I borne.

And true it is that, after all is said,
Much comfort lies in being shaved in bed ;
A Moment's added Proneness for the Limbs ;
A momentary Rest beneath the Head.

Come, fill the Cup ! The nerve-sustaining Tî
Shall woo me with the fragrance of Bohî ;
What matter that to some the Koko brings
Relief, to some the Cingalese Kofî.

For in a minute Toil, that ever thrives,
Shall chain me with her Shackles and her Gyves ;
And ever crieth Wisdom in the streets,
" To Work ! For needs Ye must when Someone drives!"

Yet ah ! that I did Yesternight employ
In Pûl and Pokâ's thirst-producing Joy,
Unheedful of the morrow-born Remorse,
The parboiled Eye that frights th' evocant Boy !

To every Morn its proper Thirst, they say ;
But what about the Thirst of Yesterday ?
No matter how I bend me to the Task,
I cannot,—cannot drive the thing away !

And true it is that never glows so red
The Nose that from th' inimic Fist hath bled,
As that,—mute Witness of the Night's debauch—
Which marks the nerveless Owner of the Head.

And though, 'ere Midnight with To-morrow blent,
I dallied with the Cup in much content,
I own that, at the dawning of To-day,
I shudder for the Yesternight mis-spent.

* * * * *

O Friend of pseudo-philosophic Calm,
Who found within the Cup a Life's Arâm,
Thy Counsel, howsoever good to read,
Were bad indeed to follow, Friend Khayyam !

Was it not Suleimân the Wise that said,
"Look not upon the Wine when it is red"?
And Suleimân the Wise knew What
was Which,
Tho' that great Heart of his outmatched
his Head.

* * * * *

Ah, with the Pledge a Door of Refuge ope,
To win me from the facile downward Slope,
And write me down, fulfilled of Self-esteem
A Prop and Pillar of the Band of Hope!

That in the Club, should whilom Comrades try
To lure me to a Roister on the sly,
The necessary Zeal I may not lack
To turn away, nor wink the Other Eye.

For though my Reformations in the Past
Have made the "stern Recorder" stand aghast,
Myself am tolerably well-assured
That this, at least, can hardly fail to last!

VIII. HINC ILLÆ LACRIMÆ.

"Our Officers.....as a rule are stupid."

London Press.

I weep !
For oh, the Mail, the bonny British Mail,
In which " I have most joy and most affiance,"
Doth shrill afar the tear-compelling tale
That Ye are frail as fair, nor worth reliance ;
Ye beautiful, the crystal globules creep
Adown my nasal organ. Lo ! I weep !

I sob !
That read with poignant suffering that these
Whose life, methought, was one long education,
Have shunned th' encarmined books for slothful ease,
And gained an emphasised accrimination.
My shattered idols ! Base it were to rob
The fame of such as Ye ; whereto I sob.

I scream !
Was it for this that Counting Pence (or Pice)
Or Smelling Meat, or running village shopses,
(The Rusk—the Rashered Swine—the Cheddar's slice)
Have laid Ye bare to Grub Street's venomed wopses ?
Awake, awake ! Dispel mine anguished dream !
Restore my mental balance, or I scream !

I roar !
Alas ! Can marching down the street, the lane,
In merry England, gaitered, clothed, and booted,
Where notice-boards announce, in legend plain,
The fact that "Trespassers are Prosecuted,"
Can *this* have taught Ye nought of Martial Lore ?
Is't *thus* Ye use advantage ? Hear ! I roar !

I groan !
What, dullards, what ? Have Institute Accounts,
Or Warrior-task like these, in no wise trained Ye

To shun the ambush, mock th' entrenchëd Mounts,
And make as nought this cavil that hath stained Ye?
Go to! Go to! Olôla! Ye are thrown
To foes that rend Ye piecemeal, Hush! I groan!

IX. SOLILOQUISETH ON CHANGES IN UNIFORM.

(AFTER W. S.)

Enter 2nd Lieutenant HAMLET, who museth in this wise.

To strike or not to strike,—that is the question ;
Whether 'tis better business to suffer
The sneers and scoffs of our outrageous Colonel,
Or to go large and add another trouble
To those that never end ? To buy,—to pay,—
In time ! And by that payment make an end
Of tailors' and the thousand bill-ious ills
We get let in for,—that's an " alteration "
Devoutly to be wished. To buy,—to pay,—
To *p-a-y !* Perchance be sold ! That's where it is ;
For in that payment there's an even chance
That, 'ere we've shuffled on this newest coat,
'Twill be abolished, " cast," and obsolete.
That gives us pause,—makes us sit up and think,—
And brings calamity upon a purse
That's not at all prepared to stand the shock.

For who would wear the victim-coat of time,
The "greening blue," the daily whitening seam
That shows th' evasive stitch, the faded red,
The tarnished buttons, and the blackened badge,
If he himself could stop the thing at once
With a cool fiver?
Who would not prefer
To shine and glisten like the gorgeous Sun
In smart attire, and siller have to spare?
But that the dread of something unforeseen,
Some unsuspected order, of whose scope
No subaltern has knowledge, chokes us off,
And makes us rather wear the things we have
Than order others just to chuck away;
Thus costume does make slovens of us all,
And thus the comely blue and red of commerce
Is sicklied o'er with the pale signs of age,
And "confidentials" full of pith and venom
Come flying round our heads. No, damme, no!
The thing's a bit too stiff!

But he has to!

X. THE WOOIN' O' TUMMAS.

(AFTER R. B.)

Tummas Katt cam' roun' to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooin' o't;
Lichtly sang ta lang nicht thro',
Ha, ha, the mewin' o't;
Tabbie, winsome tim'rous beast,
Speakit: "Tummas, haud tha' weist!"
Girt auld Tummas 'gan inseest;
Ha, ha, the doin' o't!

Tabbie laucht, an' brawly fleired,
Ha, ha, the fleirin' o't;
Tummas,—ech, but Tummas speired,
Losh, losh, the speirin' o't;
Sic' an awesome, fearfu' screep;
Wakin' a' aroun' frae sleep;
Fegs, it gar'd the Gudeman weep!
Aw, aw, the hearin' o't!

Quoth the Gudeman : " Dairm his een ! "
Ha, ha, the sweerin' o't ;
" Muckle fasht was I yest'reen ;
A' thro' the hearin' o't ! "
" Ere the sonsie moon was bricht,
Clean awa' till mornin' licht,
Mickle sleep was mine the nicht ;
Aw, aw, the hearin' o't ! "

" Where are noo ma booties twa ?
Ha, ha, the stoppin' o't ;
'Tis mysel' shall gar him fa' ;
Ha, ha, the coppin' o't !
'Gin a bootie, strang an' stoot,
Sneckit Tummas roun' ta snoot,
Weel I ken he'll na bide oot !
Hech, hech, the droppin' o't ! "

Swuft the pawky booties came,
Ya, ya, the flittin' o't :
Tummas scraught, an' lit for hame,
Hech, hech, the spittin' o't ;
Lauchit Tabbs to see him fa' ;
Leapit frae ta gairden wa' ;

Quoth the Gudeman : " Dairm it a' !
What price the hittin' o't ? "

NOTE :—*Particular attention is requested to the " Scotch,' which is warranted " above proof."*

XI. AMBITION.

If thou would'st thrust aside the bars
    That guard th' Insoluble, and trace
The passage of the furthest Stars
    Through dreams of undimensioned Space;
Or if Ambition bid thee stand
    And number, in a thought profound,
Th' innumerable grains of sand,
    Wherein the Ocean lieth bound;

If thou would'st view, with front serene,
    That Home of all Infinities,
Where Will-be, Was, and Might-have-been
    Blend in the harmonies of Is;
Where Omega and Alpha bask
    Commingled; whither, ranging high,
Thou may'st—oh noble, hallowed task,—
    Evaluate the symbol "π";

Would'st see that Vision of Delight,
    When, re-emergent from the Past,

The sad twin-parallels unite,
    Or watch, self-poised within the Vast,
The homing of the mystic Arc
    Hyperbola, whose backward sweep
Thy pow'rs alone have force to mark
    Through that immeasurable Deep ;

* * * * *

Friend, if indeed thy noble Soul
    To labours such as these aspire,
Oh, when thou hast attained the Goal,
    Drop me a line, or send a wire !

XII. THE "BARBER" SONG.

A FRAGMENT FROM A HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED IDYLL.

(AFTER A. T.)

* * * * *

So the night
Passed, and a long shaft smote across the plain
From the East; and the Morn wakened, and the air
Quivered to all the burden of the day.

Then the good knight arose, and, hand on chin,
Mused, petulant: "Alas"—so he—"Alas,
To shave!" and made his muffled orisons,
(Such as they were) when thro' the casement he
Beheld the Barber as he shuffled past
From house adjoining.

Of a sudden came
Upon him that weird seizure of the Pote,
And drave him into agonies of song
Impromptu,—for he fancied he could sing.

"Oh Barber, Barber, passing, passing by,
Come to me and fall upon my stubbly chin,
And shave me, shave me as I'm half asleep."

"Yet mark thee, Barber, ere thou drawest near,
That bright and keen and urgent is the blade,
And creamy, soft, and scented is the soap."

"O Barber, Barber, my comfort harbour, and ply
Thine art with caution, lest there rise and smart
And sting and tickle many pimply spots."

"O hasten thou, and fetch the softest towel,
And lay it on my bosom, to arrest
The flakes of snowy lather in their fall."

"Why lingerest thou to lather me afresh,
Retouching, as the Artist doth retouch
To please himself, not caring for the rest?'

"O hasten, Barber, speed thy soapy task,
For sweet the smile that greets the early worm,
And grim the scowl for those arriving late."

"O Barber, Barber, seek the Colonel's lair,
Fly to him and soap and shave him; hack his chin!
And keep him, keep him till I'm safe away."

And one that told the tale at breakfast time,
Said that the Singer *did* arrive there first;
But one that told it later, said he didn't.

XIII. TO MY DHOBI !

* * * * *

Tear ! Tear ! Tear !
In your old traditional way ;
And it's hopeless attempting to utter
The things I should like to say.

O well for the villainous Boy !
For he's up to his neck in the swim ;
O well for the tailor man !
For it's moderate wealth to him.

And the list " to mend " goes on
At the foot of his monthly bill ;
But oh for a single respectable shirt,
Or a collar that isn't a frill !

Tear ! Tear ! Tear !
Till my linen is all U.P.,
But the tender glaze on a shirt that is boiled,
Is only a dream to me !

XIV. "OOM!"

Do they sleep? Do they feast?
    Have they gone on a bout?
Are they off to the East,
    Or has Bobs chucked them out?
Have the war correspondents been bottled,
    Or can there be nothing to spout?

For the papers are dumb,
    Tho' there's plenty of room,
As to what has become
    Of the Boss of a Boom,
Who adds to "Paul Kruger," as prefix,
    The nobly reverberate "OOM!"

Is he still going strong?
    Has he got to the Coast?
Is he drifting along
    Till we get him on toast?
Will the—*oom* with a *D*—be his future?
    (The *paul*—with an—*o* and a—*post*)

Is he kept up a tree
By the truculent Steyn,
From an elegant spree
On the banks of the Seine?
Like the mythic but mournful Œnone,
Who wept for her "Paris" in vain.

For they say that he'd "shove"
With his pipe and his gal,
But the party above
Whom he took for a pal,
Holds opposite views on the subject,
And says he'll be blowed if he shall!

So he dreams of the hoard,
That he's rumoured to hold,
Of the shares that he scored
From a "gamble in gold,"
That he piled when his country was piling,
And sold when his country was sold.

And he sighs for the job,
Irretrievably lost,
When he lived like a nob

In the land that he bossed,
Where the wrongs were apparently right,
But the " Reitz " a ridiculous frost.

Did he say that the fight
Had been only begun ?
Were they quoting him right ?
Was it only his fun ?
Will they *really* turn into gorillas,
Or was it a blind for a run ?

But the questions that rise
On the glory or gloom
Of the cryptic, but wise
And ineffable OOM,
Would fill up a couple of volumes,
And then there would hardly be room.

So I finish in style,
By asserting with *vim*
That, for largeness of guile,
And for tricks that are slim,
The OOM is a freak of creation,
And nobody's in it with him !

XV. A PROTHEST.

O Mickey dear, and did ye hear the latest news
afut?
They've gone and stuck the Shamrock on the
bould Hoibernian nut.
For many a year St. Pathrick's Day the grand
evint has been
For coat-tails on the pasthure-land, an' wigs upon
the green.
But I met wid Docthor———, an' he clutched
me by the hair,
An' he up an' said "Bad scran to ye, an' phwat's
ye doin' there?
There's an Indignation Meeting in Committee
Room Fifteen,
Prothestin' 'gin the Governmint for sanctionin'
the Green."

Av coorse the impty complimint is foine enough,
ye think;
*But phwat about the Honorable Mimbers' mate an'
dhrink?*

'Tis we that foight for Oireland, for her praties
and potheen,
But foights are gettin' fewer, wid a longer toime
between.
'Tis killin' us by koindness that the murtherin'
Saxon tries,
For a Parleymenth'ry Donnybrook's the bhoy to
get supplies;
It's the most disgustin' incident that iver yet
has been,
For they've robbed the Oirish Mimbers of their
annual "Irish Scene."

XVI. TO POSSIBLE PORTLY PATRIOTS.

On their re-appearance for temporary service in the Royal Reserve Battalions.

(AFTER T. C.)

* * * * *

Ye veterans of England,
That wore the red and blue,
Who suffer from the odd complaint
Of "nothing-much-to-do,"
Your brave apparel don again,
A chest expansive throw,
And meet
Up the street,
Where the barrack bugles blow;
Where the language waxes frank and free,
And the soldiers come and go.

The stitches of your,—say your coat,
Shall start at every seam;
The form they loved has ampler grown,
And broader in the beam!

But though, where hole and button met,
A convex smiles below ;
Well, at worst,
They must burst,
And the bland hiatus show !
While the fiery language grows apace,
And the soldier-servants sew.

Britannia lacks the Ballot,
But still she gets along ;
Her army's on the lonely veldt,
But you are going strong ;
A stern paralysis of fear
Shall strike th' astounded foe,
As they reach
Brighton Beach,
And you greet them in a row !
When the first to reach the shore will strive
To be the first to go.

The flaming torch of England
Invincible shall burn,
With you to front th' invasive force
At every blessed turn.

Up, up, my chubby veterans !
While public plaudits flow
In a song,
Hot and strong,
To your unexampled show.
Till the " absent mind " returns again
And the present *Men(s)* can go !

XVII. "LAUREANTICS!"

Lines written on reading "Mafeking."

(AFTER A. T.)

* * * * *

Patriotic Alfred A.,
  I see you're busy once again;
You're not the sort of man to shrink
  From giving harmless people pain;
When foes revile, you calmly smile,
  And wonder what excites them so;
But there are things about your last,
  That bring your former record low.

Patriotic Alfred A.,
  Think of the strangely buoyant song
Wherein, anent a certain Ride,
  You blandly questioned; "Was it wrong?"
A stirring scene there must have been,
  When, looking thro' the daily press,
You found that every blessed soul
  Unanimously thundered: "YES!"

Patriotic Alfred A.,
  The critics, with a wild hurroo,
And all the passions of their kind,
  Invariably go for you ;
But then, your Ode when Jameson rode,
  Your Cecil-wrestle-blench-meant Lay,
I ask you,—*do* they serve to paint
  That snowy lily, Alfred A. ?

Gently, gently, Alfred A. ;
  For, tho' you love to range aloof,
Your hide must be extremely tough,
  And enviably weatherproof.
And yet your "bow'rs, and show'rs, and flow'rs"
  Were clothed in many kindly charms ;
A simple "English Lyric" song
  Is worth a dozen calls "To Arms !"

Think a moment, Alfred A.,
  In yonder "hollow lotus-land,"
A greater Alfred sighs to read
  The verse-that-won't-be-rhymed-or-
                -scanned ;

And, truth to speak, you ought to seek
  Some Rhyming Dictionary's aid;
Stout rhymes are cheap at three-and-six,
  Or two-and-ten if cash is paid.

Hang it, Mr. Alfred A.,
  When next your wild afflatus glows,
Are there no roses, cows and things,
  And can't you work it off on those?
Oh, paint the scene when woods are green,
  The tinge that decks the robin's breast;
Apologise for "English Spring";
  But let the British Lion rest!

XVIII. A RELAPSE.

(AFTER C. R.)

My heart is like a motor-car
  That busts beneath its beaming lord ;
My heart is like a bad cigar
  To one that gazes overboard ;
My heart is like an artless fair,
  Whose confidence has been abused ;
My heart would fain, but cannot swear,
  Because my leave has been refused.

Hire me a man that steers a barge,
  A writer from the Paris Press,
A Cabman with his legal charge,
  And bid them harp to my distress !
Ply them with whisky, beer and rum,
  With fierce and fiery eau-de-vie,
Because my feeble powers are dumb,
  Because the job's too big for me,

Be—CAUSE I'm blanky, BLANKY, dumb!
Because the Job,
The—er, the—er JOB,
The JOB'S too BLANKY BIG,
Too big for me!

XIX. CARMEN LAUDIS.

"On account of the intense heat prevailing, the Cricket Match,—Bombay Gymkhana vs. *Jackal Club, is cancelled."*

Bombay Press.

Now is the *Mon*soon rolling up triumphant ;
Now is the soil delightedly responsive ;
Now we resume our waterproof apparel,
And our goloshes.

Burgeons the fungoid growth about our bootses ;
Coyly the book disdains the widowed binding ;
Only the youth laments the old, resplendent
Gloss on his shirt-front.

Sing, blushing Muse, and raise a joyous pœan ;
Sing of the cause that led to this resultant ;
Lift the deserving, stick 'em up on high for
Public approval.

Bright was the sky that afternoon of Friday ;
Hot, was it hot ? Well yes, it was, a trifle !
Ask of the throng that sought the gay Gymkhana,
Freely perspiring !

" What made them go, then ? " Know ye not the reason ?
Why, on the morrow sat the yearly function,
When the Gymkhana play the men of Nimrod,
Play 'em at cricket.

Saturday's press contained the mystic legend :
" Note ye ! The match, Gymkhana *vs.* Jackals,
Standeth postponed, because of the intense heat
Widely prevailing ! "

Lords of the Rain, what time Ye came to hear it,
Did Ye not say : " Behold th' occasion ample,
Fit to display the humour We delight in,
Who says a cooler ? "

Dull broke the dawn that memorable morning ;
  Slowly appeared a bank of cloudy splendour ;
Gloomy, portentous, threatening, etcet'ra,
        Etceterorum !

Black grew the sky, mysteriously awful ;
  Cool was the day, refreshing were the breezes ;
Finally, too, for no apparent reason,
        BURSTED the *Mon*soon !

* * * * * *

Bafflers of ill, defeaters of prognostics,
  Freely accept the thanks of this deponent ;
Hear ye the cries of "Ho, for the Gymkhana !"
        "Bully the Jackals !"

Slumber, O Muse, that's all for you this morning ;
  Only reflect that, on the next occasion,
Verse without rhyme is beef bereft of mustard,
        People don't like it !

XX. FIDELE IN LADYSMITH.

A Factory has been started where excellent horse-sausage and sustaining soup are made.—Telegram.

(AFTER W. S.)

* * * * *

Feel no more the pride o' parade,
  Glitt'ring buckle, gleaming boss-age ;
In the rounded skin displayed,
  Thou art cooked and turned to soss-age ;
Horses must, if man would eat,
Like sheep or bullocks, come to meat.

Fear no more the prick o' the heel,
  If thy noble head should droop ;
Thou hast lost the pow'r to feel,
  In the bracing guise of soup ;
Liquid, all that now is seen,
In an improvised tureen.

Neither play the mare o' the night!
  Tho', methinks, "*such stuff thou art*
As dreams are made on," thus to 'quite
  Thy comrades were a graceless part.
Good digestion, breathings deep,
Round our little lives with sleep!

In justice to myself, I would explain that the above was written at a time when the news from Ladysmith was of an exceedingly cheery nature.

XXI. TO A PHOTOGRAPH!

* * * * *

Deep hidden in an oaken desk, and soiled
By twenty fading years,
You've lain in peace, while men have spun and toiled
'Mid joy and tears;
Concealed from prying eyes, as in a cave
Where none might pierce the gloom,
You've slept the silent slumber of the grave—
The peaceful tomb.

You shadow forth a slender, perfect face,
(Alas, 'tis faded now),
A frame, displaying every girlish grace,
An open brow;
You mark the fashion of a by-gone age,
When tennis first began;
Recalling in Life's History a page
I fear to scan.

Ah yes, for twenty years you've slept apart,
Unseen by mortal eye ;
You *should* remind me that I had a heart
In days gone by ;
But, tho' I scan your face with anxious care,
I own that I forget you ;
I can't remember who the deuce you were,
Or when I met you !

XXII. THE "CRY" IN THE COMPOUND.

(AFTER E. B. B.)

Do you hear your children yelling, O my bearer,
  Till they nearly burst their lungs?
My hours of peace are daily getting rarer;
  Will they *never* hold their tongues?
The young dog's annoying note is chronic,
  The young crow's is unctuous and rich,
The young cat is "up to Philharmonic,"
  The young frog behaves itself as sich!
But the young, young children that I speak about
  Are the worst of all the lot.
You must go and give them something fit to shriek about
  On the—yum—"official spot."

Did you whop the little devils for their shrieking,
  When I told you to before?
There doesn't seem a bit of use in speaking,
  And the thing's become a bore.

The old order changes like a bubble,
  The old silent suffering is gone,
My old Bearer's got to see some trouble,
  —The old game—and he can pass it on.
I am wearied of the silly little gabies,
  And, my comfort to restore,
I shall visit the offences of your babies
  On their fat progenitor!

You should warn the little adipose monstrosities,
  That, as sure as rain is rain,
You'll suffer for your offspring's lachrymosities,
  If I hear them yell again.
So tumble off and solve the thorny puzzle
  In any way you please, from gag to drug,
I personally recommend a muzzle
  For every little rice-bespattered mug.
They are yelling like a Bo'sun in the Navy,
  And the thing has got to end;
For otherwise, I take my solemn davy
  I shall wallop you, my friend.

XXIII. TO PRETORIA.

ON GOING FROM THE WAR.

The Oom striketh his harp, and crooneth pensive-wise.

(AFTER R. L.)

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
  That from the treasury
I took what bullion I could find,
  When honour bade me fly.

For a new master treads the meads
  Where I was wont to skip,
And would have stayed the stranger's needs
  With quid, with share, with scrip.

So thine incontinence, I ween,
  'Twere idle to deplore ;
I should have skinned thee just as clean,
  Had there been millions more !

XXIV. OF THE TINMAN.

(AFTER C. K.)

"O Lachman, go and tin the cooking-pots :—
And *tin* the cooking-pots :—
Yes, *tin* the cooking-pots :—
And make them fair to see !"
The degchies all were dank and foul i' spots,
So off to work went he.

The bastard tin came off in solid flakes,
In long and curling flakes,
In poison-dealing flakes,
That smote us grievously ;
Next morning, all were bad with tummy-aches,
But Lachman, where was he ?

"Oh is it drink, or fish, or sudden chill,
That makes us all so ill,
So very, very ill ?
O Doctor, come and see !"

"Protrude your tongues ; I'll give you each a pill;
It's *cooking-pots*," said he.

We hailed him forth from out the "dim bazaar,"
The noisy, dark bazaar,
The dusty, dim bazaar,
His baleful work to see ;
And now our Lachman "dunno where 'e are,"
And sitteth haltingly.

XXV. A "BITTER" SERENADE.

Angostura! Angostura!
  Softly from thy chamber creep;
What they call "la notte oscura"
  Isn't any time for sleep!
Hark! Melodious notes are heard
  From the distant Kummel Bird;
And the lights of Curaçoa
  Glimmer in the vale below;
Come, and have a moonlight beano
With your loving Maraschino!

Lur-lur-lur-lur-liety!
  Two's the best society!
Lur-lur-lur-lur-li-e-tee-e-e!
  Come, and take a turn with me!

Maraschino! Maraschino!
  Brigand of the ruthless deeds;
Thy seductive tenorino
  Gracefully but vainly pleads,

Odours from the dark Chartreuse
  Make me *more* than "amoureuse";
Blithely would I come to thee,
  But Mamma has got the key!
So thy prisoned Angostura
Can but sing in sweet bravura:—

"Lur-lur-lur-lur-liety,
  Dragon of propriety,
Lur-lur-lur-lur-li-yee-yee,
  Locked me in and took the key."

XXVI. COUNSEL TO BACHELORS.

"*There is the hard case of the tired bachelor.*"
"TIMES OF INDIA," 15*th January*, 1900.

(AFTER R. H.)

Scatter ye pasteboards fair and new,
The annual doom is falling;
And single men from twelve till two
Will have to take to calling.

On eager wheels your courses run
With india-rubber tyring;
For sooner will the toil be done,
Than if ye go a-hiring.

And take ye others' cards withal,
That so, if luck befriend ye,
Yourselves for all the Gang shall call,
Whose blessings shall attend ye.

But "rede ye well," ye single men,
It better were to marry;
Your wives can do the calling then,
And ye at home can tarry.

XXVII.—NEMESIS.

Oh Romans, fellow-countrymen and friends,
As matters full of tragedy concern us,
To gain the added dignity it lends,
I now assume the classical cothurnus !

And should the Vulgar such a claim asperse,
We've excellent authority to back us,
In one who used to write a lot of verse,
And answered to the name of Horace Flaccus !

A Captain James MacGreen I now present,
A merry wag, admittedly provoking,
Whose idle hours were principally spent
In practical and harmful forms of joking.

In bashful subalterns of tender age
He found a prey that suffered willy-nilly,
But one, the genial Frederick William Page,
He badgered till he nearly drove him silly.

And why on earth it covered him with glee,
To pester one so eminently steady,
Is just as great a mystery to me,
As, doubtless, to the sacrificial Freddy.

He slumbered, and awoke with blackened eyes;
His pockets yielded constant food for wonder;
He took a chair, but, when he tried to rise,
Was forced to get it cut away from under.

Betwixt his saddle and his breeches' seat,
Some cobblers' wax secured him like Mazeppa;
The powder that he used for prickly heat
Miraculously changed itself to pepper.

His very dog, whose noble port and mien
Suffused a proper pride from every feature,
Appeared one morning dyed a brilliant green,
And roamed abroad, a shamed and stricken creature.

And ever since that season of disgrace,
The wary hound, on seeing James appearing,
Immediately annihilated space,
Pursued by his oppressor's lusty cheering.

But still the stoic youth, with courage high,
Maintained to James a dignified urbanity,
And "looked upon him with a soldier's eye,"
Which seemed to cast a doubt upon his sanity.

It happened that the ruffianly MacGreen
His Colonel's daughter loved beyond expression,
The fair Eurydice, and long had been
Agog to make the welcome soft confession.

But she and Freddy loved with ardour vast,
Tho' James had no idea that things had been so;
She "loved him for the dangers he had passed,
And he loved her" because she loathed MacGreen so.

So great did James's amorous yearnings grow,
That he upon a Club At Home decided,
Though all the world were there, to risk a blow,
Or take the goods the kindly Gods provided.

But when to beg an interview he wrote,
To "ask her something really most particular,"
She said, "why, certainly," and took the note,
And poured its burden into Fred's auricular.

That afternoon MacGreen was in his best
At three o'clock,—this self-intended Orpheus,—
So took a chair, his whirling brain to rest,
And fell an unresisting prey to Morpheus.

The Poet to his Reader.

But deary me,—tho' strange, perhaps, to you,—
This metre's getting dreadfully laborious;
I feel inclined to shift to something new,
Less difficult, tho' not so meritorious!

He does so.

Now Fred, who was passing, looked into the room,
And, there, in the finest of raiment,
Discovered the tyrant, unconscious of doom,
A subject for ample repayment.

And there, on a handily neighbouring shelf,
Our hero beheld, *inter alia*,
The waterproof paints he had wept for himself,
With similar paraphernalia.

Inspired by the virulent thoughts in his heart,
He made, with artistic economy,
A study of Nature exalted by Art,
On James's malign physiognomy.

MacGreen had an occiput bald as the sky;
So, slap on the top of his crumpet,
He painted a spider at lunch on a fly,
While a cherub was learning the trumpet.

His eyebrows and muzzle he tinted with care,
The hue of a scarlet geranium;
He inked his moustache, and he clipped at his hair,
And totally altered his cranium.

He drew on his forehead, with scrollery deft,
The pregnant remark, "Requiesco!"
And, when he had finished, his rival he left
A sort of perambulant fresco.

Then, being a youth of pre-Raphaelite cult,
While James was abnormally florid,
He hollowed his cheeks, and the final result
Was—nothing describes it but—horrid!

The work was exceedingly good on the whole;
The web was distinctly artistic;
The fly was a portrait; the cherub and scroll
Impressions, but quite realistic.

He wrote out a placard and stuck it behind;
It stated, in subtle derision,

That Captain MacGreen had been always blind
And had never recovered his vision.

Then, thinking that James might object to the fun,
Whenever he happened to spot it,
He went to the Adjutant,—said what he'd done,—
Appealed for some leave,—*and he got it* !

* * * *

Captain MacGreen awoke ; " Great Scott !
" I'm late as it is,"—was off like a shot !

* * * * *

Captain MacGreen, he galloped away,
Out of the Club that horrible day ;
Yells of laughter and ribald jeers
Ringing aloud in his frenzied ears ;
Mad for concealment, away he fled ;
Got to his bungalow,—rushed to bed !

* * * * *

Captain MacGreen
Was presently seen,
Suffering pangs of internal fire ;
A short time yet,
And, in the *Gazette :*
" Captain MacGreen is allowed to retire ! "

XXVIII. ARMA VIRUMQUE CANO!

* * * * * *

Awake, my faithless Lyre, and once again
Inspire me to à bold and martial strain;
I sing of war, of battle devastating,
Of guile of Brigadiers' and Umpires' slating:
Compelled am I to this,—ay, there's the rub,
In all the Messes, even in the Club,
They talk Manœuvres; none but claims the best of it,—
"I had ten men to one," and all the rest of it!

* * * * * *

Tho' Phœbus now the Southern Plains doth polish,
Our Northern air is hardly yet tolollish;
But, braving chance of fever, cold, and chills,
We've had ten days' manœuvres in the Hills;
Whereof the initial scene of blood and thunder
Now claims your horror, and demands your wonder.

The night was dark ; with furtive step and slow,
Our dauntless band put forth to meet the foe ;
Dead silence ruled supreme, save twice alone,
Where one had heedless thrust against a stone
Five quiv'ring toes, and shrilled the bubbling cry
Of some strong Captain in his agony.

Morning arose, and still with language strong,
We lacked the foeman's non-existent throng ;
Then, growing brave and reckless in profession,
Assailed with scorn such wanton retrogression ;
In fear, as we assured ourselves in flattery,
Of our Battalions, and our Mountain Battery.

But lo! Who "thrids the dusty-circled mazes"?
A brave Sowar comes galloping like blazes,
Within his horny hand a chit, to say
The craven foe had moved, ere break of day,
Around the foot of mountains stretched before us,
To seize a place—I want a rhyme—say "Norus."

Our Brigadier's brow was sternly wrought,
His seething brain all crinkled up in thought ;

Until, in accents passing brave and free,
He hailed his A. A., D. A. Q. M. G. ;
" We'll climb the hill, as they've gone round the bottom ;
" We'll get there first, and then, by Jove, we've got 'em !"

So far, so good ; there's not a detail wrong,
And yet I'm hanged if I can get along ;
A map's required to give elucidation
To so remarkable a situation ;
But here's a fact I didn't see in time,
You cannot turn a contour into rhyme !

Well, well, here goes ! of maps I'll be a docker,
Though that, I fear, accordeth not to Cocker ;
Enough to say we marched o'er hills tremendous,
Each khud, we ever thought, will surely end us ;
The Gunners scored, deriving, it appears,
Manual assistance from their *khacchars*' ears.

And still we clomb,—and still the hills before us
Rose as a hopeless barrier to Norus;

And every man of all that daring throng
Larded the lean earth as he walked along ;
Until, when life was near akin to death,
We halted on the summit for a breath.

Ha !—What is that ?—What means that cloud of
dust ?
Can it be so ? No,—yes,—no,—yes,—it must—,
It *is* the foe in part, a gallant corps,
In whom possession lives the only lore ;
If they get in, we can but " close the bank ";
What care these desperado hordes for blank ?

Now I must pause a moment to explain
Our great anxiety this spot to gain ;
It wasn't for its tactical import,
Though, doubtless, so our Brigadier thought ;
But this it was ; search all the country round,
You couldn't find another Camping-ground ;
And thus we thought, " Unless we win, good
lack !
" We jolly well shall have to bivouac !"

On pushed the foe, and on our gallant band,
In fixed resolve to gain the Promised Land ;
The enemy are nearing,—faster—faster !
They're in ! Oh crushing, terrible disaster !
And from our horde arose a clamour great,
"They're in ! No camp for us ! Too Late,—
Too Late !"

BANG ! What is that ? Ba-bang ! Ha, ha, they're done !
Our Battery, and they're without a gun !
Against the sky a cheering sight appears,
The flapping of the mules' enormous ears ;
Encouraged thus, we reach an undulation,
And open out in sound attack formation.

From half past two till four the battle raged,
Nor then was all our warrior-thirst assuaged ;
And many a deed was done, and reckless feat,
To make men shudder and their pulses beat ;
But, scorning "blank," until the "Cease Fire" sounded,
That ruffian gang, out-generalled, surrounded,
Called to surrender, signalled back, explaining,

That there they were, and there proposed
remaining !

I'll not prolong the tale—enough to say,
At 4 P.M. the harsh, discordant bray
Of bugles blown by bellows strong, untiring,
Sent musical command to cease our firing ;
The which when done, we eased our cloying
throttles,
Using our Mark X, Frontier Water-bottles.

* * * * *

Who won that fight, I own without emotion,
I haven't got the very faintest notion ;
But let me state, to ease your anxious mind,
If haply to this lyric you've inclined ;
It made no odds,—we didn't care a feather,
For friend and foe encamped in peace together !

XXIX. LABBITUDES.

Had my advice been followed, there would have been no war.—TRUTH.

Behold the Rehoboam of Society,
The Scoffer at the Title and the Name;
A Personage whose active notoriety
Is far beyond the emptiness of Fame!
Insolvent Earls, and Barons in embarrassment,
Awake in me a fine artistic heat;
And Princes in a chronic state of harassment
I love as much as something good to eat.

I run a kind of military pillory
For anything that "Thomas" likes to hint,
Where foot, and horse, and this or that Artillery
Can find themselves immortalised in print;
The method I employ is quite mechanical,
When "Thomas" gives his Officer a shove,

The latter's *ex officio* tyrannical,
The former is the only man I love.

I teach the law to legal luminosities,
—It isn't good for much, to say the least—
I dig for magisterial atrocities,
And doctrinise the Bishop and the Priest;
I claim the proletariat's *mandamus-es*,
To show the Proud the error of his ways;
And, as the world is full of ignoramuses,
It pays,—oh, undeniably it pays!

The Emperor, the Israelite usurious,
The President, the Premier, or the Queen,
The Millionaire, the Peerage, the Penurious,
The charitably Generous, the Mean;
The Parson, or the Person in authority,
The Officer, on land or on the sea,
And those who "lead" the Radical minority
Are only kept respectable by me.

Ye Tory-men, uncouth and Jesuitical,
Who treat me with impertinent disdain;

Who snigger when I'm extra-hypercritical,
And now suggest I might as well "explain";
You know, yourselves, that years of mischief-mongering,
Combined with hurling insults at the Great,
Has roused in me an ever-present hungering
To supervise the Running of the State.

I told you what the Universe was betting on,
I told you what you ought to be about;
And you—you wondered how my feet were getting on,
And if my mother knew that I was out;
So, tired of Joe's monocular depravities,
I sought the fairy Oom across the brine;
Whose sympathetic auditory cavities,
"These things to hear did seriously incline."

In future, when a Joseph's imperspicience,
Has whelmed you in the darkness of the night,
You'll mourn that Labbi-tudinous Omniscience,
That possibly had guided you aright;

And please reflect that what you hold as shabbiness
In common men, and punish in the youth,
In me is simply Labbitory Labbi-ness,
Designed in the necessities of *Truth.*

TO HIS PARTNER.

[*Who may have the command in anything or nothing.*]

Bid me to lead, and I will lead
My hottest suit to thee.
But, if thou'lt double, I will lead
And then a heart 'twill be.

A heart as high, a heart as strong,
The highest heart of three,
Though I may hold the convention wrong
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid hearts to play, and I will play,
To honour thy decree.
Or bid me act the other way,
And I'll do so for thee.

Bid me to ruff and I will ruff
While there's a trump with me.
And, having none, [illegible] will bluff
As though I still had three.

Bid me declare, and I'll declare,
As bold as bold can be,
Tip me the wink, and I will dare.
No Trumps to go for thee.

Thou art my old and trusted pard
Thou makst eyes at me
Thou hast command of every card
That I could wish with thee.

J. A. [illegible]